loose stone. It is amazing how they get these walls to stand up, 6, 7, 10 feet high, without an ounce of mortar or mud. At the bottom they put huge stones like portmanteaux, then smaller ones like bandboxes, then others the size of quartern loaves, till as you get towards the top they have come down to the size of penny buns. Each is carefully chosen to fit as neatly as possible into the space left by the last, and wherever there is a gap left they choose a small stone that will just fit and wedge it in tight. The walls are really a beautiful sight. These side ones they build partly because they want a boundary to their field, but much more, I think, because if you didn't pile the stones somewhere there would be no field at all. There are no gates. Wood is scarce and very precious and, besides, at different seasons and for different purposes you might want the gate now in one place, now in another. So when you want to get in, you just pull down as much of the wall as necessary and build it up again when your work is done.

Presently we came to a large garden with handsome walnut trees, its long wall broken by a wooden door now open. Hurmat told us that this was the semi-royal domain, where the Mir's first wife and what the German royalties would call his morganatic family were settled. Festivities were going on inside, and we were assured that anyone might enter. Fortified by this we went in and were made welcome by two semi-royal grandsons, one a lad of seventeen or eighteen and one a jolly little boy of perhaps ten, who were sitting on a carpet spread on a raised piece of ground below some trees. Our hosts made us immediately at home, and a chair was fetched for me.

There was a little grass under the trees, and just inside the wall an open earthen space like a bit of a school playground. The band was sitting against the wall, while men and boys were dancing and a largish audience was clapping and hurrahing at intervals. Baskets and dishes of ripe apricots were lying about everywhere, and everyone helped himself as inclined. Fruit was brought for us and the merry-making went on as before. It was delightfully gay and informal and our young hosts did not allow us to feel out of things. We took care not to stay too

ILLNESS CALLS A HALT

incarnate deity) conquered Hai Hai Yúl (= Hunza) he took 113
to wife the Princess Búbuli. He had not been long in the 773
country till he saw in a dream Tibet invaded and his earlier queen carried into captivity, so he determined to return and deal with his enemies. Even in the Tibetan versions of the Gesar Saga it is difficult to avoid thinking him an ugly type of hero, a still more unpleasant manifestation of the divine, and the absolute limit in undesirable husbands. Princess Búbuli asked when she might look for his return: "I'll go to-morrow and return yesterday"; he said, "when donkeys grow horns, when millstones grow beards, when the river flows uphill, I shall come back." Lest she should get into trouble during this brief grass-widowhood he seated her on this granite spike with a 200-lb. bag of millet-seed and a cock: "Give him one grain a year, and when the grain is done, I shall return." And there the luckless princess sits, and you can hear her wailing in the winter storm.

The road commands a fine view of the junction of the 133
Nagir with the Hunza River, and the rugged, savage valley 491
which leads to the Nagir capital, tucked away out of sight amongst its sunless mountains near the great Hispar glacier. On our Hunza side the ground falls steeply with fertile bays of terraced fields and groves of apricots, all still in late July laden with their golden fruit. The road winds round various bluffs, following of course the contours of the mountain-side, and you can see several villages below, including Ganesh, clustered on the very edge of the river cliffs. High 644
above the field-terraces on our left we presently espied the 133
white front of the fortress-palace that has looked down over 312
the fields of Hunza for at least six hundred years—surely the most dominating seat of kings in the wide world. It is built on the cliff edge of a projecting promontory that falls perpendicularly—but from the road invisibly—behind it; and behind that again lies the mighty ravine of the Ulter Ber, up which, far out of sight, is the almost inaccessible glacier that supplies all the waters of Hunza, from Áltít (two miles beyond and some hundreds of feet below Báltít) to Aliábád, feeding five or six different aqueducts, including, of course, the Dála.

ILLNESS CALLS A HALT

Above and below us as we rode the barley harvest was being speedily gathered in; family groups were reaping, threshing, winnowing, while the more advanced were already hastily reploughing their land for various kinds of millet. Though the Hunza summer is short, the sun at these heights is hot, and with luck each hard-worked field will bear two crops a season. The barley field which is soonest clear will ripen a later crop of millet; the wheat field, ready a fortnight or three weeks later, will still be in time for one or other type of buckwheat. Barley must in olden days have been the standard crop, for all the sowing and harvest festivals centre round it. But the Hunzukuts[1] of to-day vastly prefers wheaten bread and sows as much wheat as he dares. Even the winter-sown wheat, however, ripens later than the spring barley, and since every ingenious device of agriculture only "just gives what life requires, but gives no more," he cannot afford to concentrate on wheat alone. Each year the peasant farmer makes his calculations afresh; experience has taught him much about the rotation of crops, the different varieties of grain that each field —according to soil, water, and aspect—can most profitably bear, and his gamble with nature is a highly intelligent one. In the opener fields of Aliábád we reckoned that the proportion of wheat to barley was roughly two to one, nearer Báltít one to two.

If later in the year you point to a field and ask "What crop is that?" the answer will not be "Such and such a millet, or such and such a buckwheat," but the name of the growing crop with the additional information "On top of wheat" or "On top of barley," which will give you the difference of some weeks in the date of sowing and probably also indicate some subtle difference in the quality of the soil if you have learnt enough basic agriculture to interpret the facts aright.

Our narrow mountain track skirted the face of a magnificent amphitheatre of storeyed cultivation, plunging every now and then into welcome belts of fruit trees, willows and poplars, crossing foaming mountain torrents in cracks of the hillside, none too easy to ford in July, though only rock-strewn gullies

[1] Hunzukuts is both singular and plural.

644 in winter. Rounding the last bend of the road, we saw before us, below the Fort, the park-like promontory on which the Mir has laid out royal gardens and orchards and built himself roomy summer quarters with two or three European guest-houses. As soon as we were sighted, the band broke out into the hospitable welcome music, and at the gate of the park a young prince stood to greet us, the loveliest boy of thirteen I have ever seen. He was Sháh Khán, one of the Mir's youngest sons, but I christened him forthwith Lord Fauntleroy. Short dark curls framed his homespun cap, and with him were two playmates armed with wooden rifles, whom he calls his "bodyguard." They laughingly presented arms in fine style, and we rode on through the trees to a row of hospitable mangers where we left our ponies and saw Prince Ghazan Khan (the "Prince of Wales"[1]) advancing on foot to meet us.

On our right we left the large open courtyard banked up on to the hillside with verandahs on two sides, where the Mir sits daily in public to dispense justice in the final court of appeal. A steep flight of irregular stone steps is fitted to the contour of the hill; above them on a large granite boulder is picturesquely and ingeniously perched one of the Mir's new guest-houses ornamented outside with ibex horns and stuffed game animals. Then the stairs turned abruptly left through a fine gateway of cut granite with two heraldic monsters couchant on the lintel, where the Mir himself was standing to await us.

643 Though nearly seventy, he was still a fine figure of a man, every inch a king, as befitted one of the few true, hereditary autocrats left in a topsy-turvy world. He led us through into a lovely English-looking orchard with apple trees bending laden boughs above the grass, to where carpets were spread on the turf beside a miniature playing fountain. A gaily decked tea-table had been set out. Our meeting was one of genuine happiness on both sides. He laughed as he shouted for the tea. "I haven't forgotten, Colonel Sahib," he said, "any hour of the day or night is tea-time, isn't it?" This dear old chestnut-

[1] Now the Mir, 1938.

then about three-thirty. We were gratefully drinking tea and 000
thinking that after all if we were not to see the dance, there were compensations in a quiet afternoon, when Mirza Hasan came in with a most courtly grin to say that if we had finished we ought to mount at once as the Mir had sent word that all was ready and they were waiting our arrival to begin.

So we gulped the rest of our tea, leaped into the saddle again, and set off for Áltít, only a mile and a half away. As someone else has already remarked, however, mere miles in this sort of country are a misleading form of reckoning, since they all stand on their hind legs. Kerimabad and Báltít Fort are perched on the brink of a great cliff about 600 and 1,000 feet respectively above the Áltít level. The ground on which they stand appears to be the ancient outpouring of the mighty ravine behind, whose glacier provides all the water for the central part of Hunza. The ground that forms the Báltít spur is not honest rock but finely powdered crumbly earth well strewn with boulders, and the zig-zag road that leads down it is not the kind of thing you would choose for a brisk canter. We scrambled down it with such reasonable caution as haste permitted, forded the torrent at the bottom—very small, of course, at this season—and made towards Áltít Fort. A fine stretch of open and (relatively) level ground lies on the landward side of the Fort, which in its turn is perched on a mighty rock cliff that falls a sheer 500 feet or more into the Hunza river, presenting a most inhospitable face to the Nagir enemy across the water. This open stretch of country explains the fact that Áltít was inhabited long before Báltít, and still remains the ceremonial centre for old-time festivals.

A lovely long polo-ground—the biggest in the Agency, 526
except perhaps the one at Gilgit itself—flanked on both sides by a row of poplars and, of course, by low stone walls (you can no more have a polo-ground in these regions without walls than you could have a billiard table without cushions), leads towards the Fort. Even from the landward side the Fort rises up most impressively from the great rock on which it is built, and the village huddles round it close and tight. We skirted 644 ●
the polo-ground by a narrow path with high field walls rising 796

BARLEY SOWING AND "STARVATION SPRINGTIME"

644 796 on our left and passed the field in which to-morrow the Bopfau ceremonies were to take place. As we drew near, the various princes and princelings came out courteously to welcome us, the less important ones, of course, coming farthest, then the grandsons in reverse age-order, and lastly Ghazan Khán himself, the heir and "Prince of Wales." Just outside the Fort there is a fine pond outlined with poplars, the main "road" (say 4 feet wide) on the left of it. The hall-doors of the houses open straight on to this track, their front-door steps being tree trunks with notches cut in them in which the foot is planted sideways as you mount.

644 351 796 Prince Ghazan Khan led us through a narrow alley between the town houses to where the Mir himself was standing to greet us. As always he made us feel more than welcome, and took us to a nicely carpeted balcony where chairs stood ready. The balcony was only a few feet above the courtyard, and we had a perfect view. You must try to imagine a "courtyard," with no straight walls or edges, shut in by irregular tiers of houses piled on top of each other, mounting the rock to the towering Fort above, their flat roofs and roofed balconies all projecting higgledy-piggledy as the haphazard contours of the rock dictate. Every roof and point of vantage was packed with people till, as usual, you felt sure the beams were bound to crash. Everybody was in their gayest and brightest dress, and every single face just radiant. There never was a people anywhere with such a gift for looking happy as the Hunzukuts.

796 535 [533] In the courtyard the musicians squatted at the base of the walls: three pipers, three men with pairs of kettledrums, and three big drummers, all of them clowning and play-acting vigorously as they played. Dancing of the more or less ordinary type was going on, varied by the singing of songs—all unfortunately in Shina, not Burushaski. The Hunza people say they have no songs of their own. DL conscientiously recorded the words of these songs later, but as in the case of the Tumushelling chant it is doubtful whether after centuries of being mangled they will yield any intelligent meaning.

Presently the GREAT DANCE came ón. The most glorious

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

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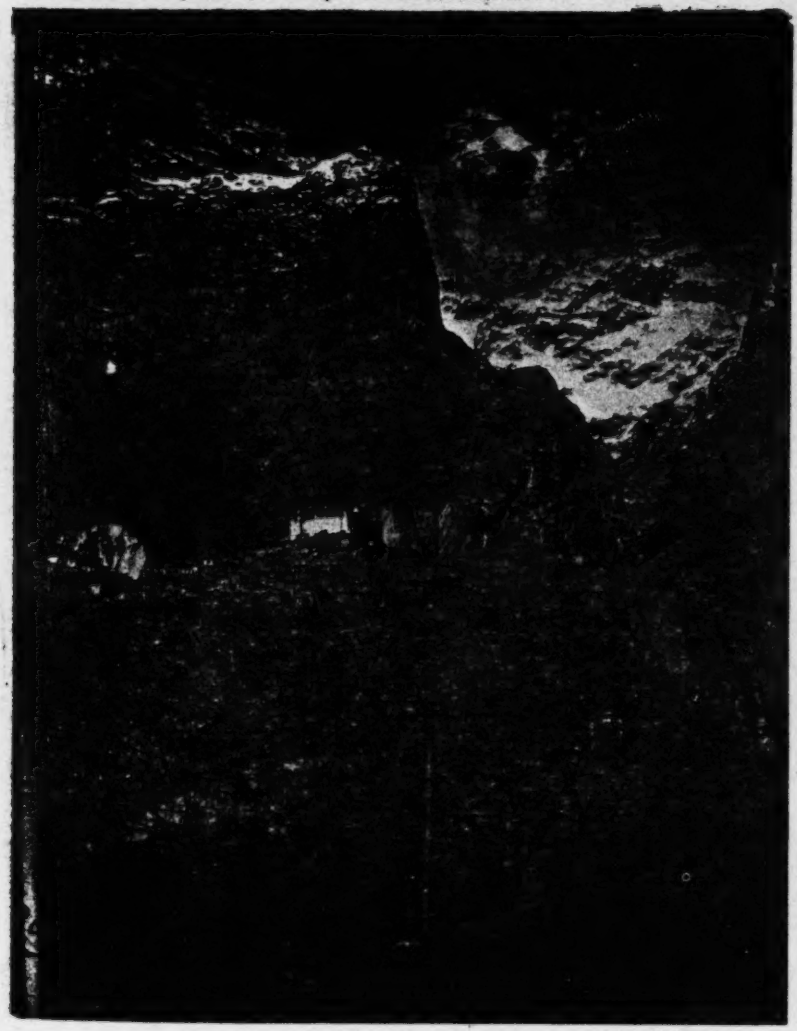

Mir's Fort at Báltit, six hundred years old. Mountains in background 23,000 ft. concealing the great glacier that waters all the oases of central Hunza. (*See pp.* 105, 106)

PLATE XVIII

Facing P. 240

BARLEY SOWING AND "STARVATION SPRINGTIME"

the New Year ushered itself in with glorious sunshine and bright skies.

Thanks to the good offices of the invaluable and versatile Mirza Hasan, we had secured two excellent ponies for the Yasin trip, and we decided to try them for the first time on this New Year ride to Báltít. DL's was a handsome brown, guaranteed to be up to his weight, which though not considerable was nevertheless somewhat greater than that of the average Hunza rider. It was accompanied by the owner, Haiyáto of Hasanabad, one of the cheeriest-faced men I have ever laid eyes on. My white one, known as Busho (the cat), was escorted by a willing and obliging lad whose actual name I have forgotten since the temptation to christen him Ernest was immediate and irresistible, so obviously full was he of the importance of being earnest. It was a great delight to feel a real horse, in contrast to a "tat," between our knees again, and we set off in high spirits for Báltít. Instead of making for Kerimabad, the Mir's hospitable gardens and European rest-houses, we mounted direct to the old Fort, which is perched on the perilous-looking brink of a great ravine with a magnificent view up and down the Hunza valley. Steep though the road is, our new mounts pluckily carried us up to the very gate. Dismounting here a rough spiral ramp led us to the "basement" of the Fort, which rises four storeys high. You enter a dark sort of hall with a square hole in the roof through which leads a rude wooden stair whose banisters are just plain poplar poles polished white by centuries of use. This lands you on an open lobby without parapet or railing, when another wooden stair (minus banister) conducts you to an open balcony, that serves as a spacious ceremonial reception-room. A low wall, not over 2 feet high, does nothing to impede the view—one of the finest views that any palace of kings can boast. At the back of this balcony is a handsomely carved pavilion under which stands a roomy "throne" covered with a purple velvet, gold-embroidered cloth. For the moment we were conducted further into a magnificent sitting-room with a fine bow window offering not only the distant scene but a more immediately amusing view of the flat roofs of the

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

644 capital huddling as close together as they can and stepped up the steep hillside. Each, of course, with its square smoke-hole in the centre.

The Mir was dressed in khaki uniform and was wearing his K.C.I.E., lots of gold lace, etc., and a fine gold skull-cap as the foundation of a silken turban. It is only on state occasions that he abandons the native woollen head-dress of the country. He was also wearing a magnificent old sword in a gold embroidered, purple-velvet scabbard, whose name is Sháhmár, "The King Slayer." After tea and smokes he adjourned with David to the outer balcony to receive his guests, all the headmen and officials of the country who had come from near and far to do homage and wish him a Happy New Year, and must be feasted with bread and meat. When the men had withdrawn the Queen and her ladies came in to join me, and we had an entertaining and amusing time. I had hoped to get some photographs of the royal group, but the indoor lighting was difficult; DL had taken the exposure meter with him, Dádo had removed my climbing stick (marked in feet) which I usually measured with, and the presence of so many grown-ups all offering good advice as to how the little princes and princesses should stand and comport themselves produced a strained atmosphere. In all the cirumstances a better photographer might have failed to get results!

Presently the outside ceremonies were over, the ladies said good-bye, and discreetly vanished before the Mir returned. After another go of tea, the Mir showed us a fine collection of old matchlock guns and swords finely damascened and overlaid with gold and silver wherever these could be got to stick. We then set off downhill to the polo-ground in advance of the Mir's party, and as we threaded our way through narrow lanes between the houses that seemed piled on each other's backs, Qudrat Ullah diverted us for a few moments to introduce us to his people. We were met at the front door by a large cow, a very nice cow, who was shooed back to her proper quarters while we were ushered up a ladder on to an open roof-balcony to meet some of the most beautiful women you can imagine, beautifully dressed, not a bit shy, and most cordial. No ladies

BARLEY SOWING AND "STARVATION SPRINGTIME

in Hunza affect seclusion except the immediate royal family. 644
In addition to Qudrat's mother, a delightfully gracious woman, and his pretty young wife, we met Dádo's wife—also very pretty, but a shade more embarrassed. The families are in some way inter-related. We got some photos here, the outdoor setting being more favourable, but dare not linger lest the Mir should be waiting for us.

We had only just got planted on the grand stand by the polo- 796
ground when we saw his procession winding down the hill, 643
the bodyguard in smart uniforms carrying the standard and the Mir with a white satin, gold-embroidered robe over his khaki, mounted on the Badakhshani stallion with the same handsome trappings as at the Bopfau. When he had taken his seat, up rushed a huge deputation from one village after another, shouting the equivalent of "O King, live for ever! May your New Year be blessed!" It was rather impressive. There was no mistaking the genuine affection and loyalty in voice and gesture.

After this followed the usual polo, archery, and dancing. Lord Fauntleroy again made excellent showing with his bow and arrow, and the youngest son of Ghazan Khan actually hit the mark, to his grandfather's pride and pleasure. The elder royal grandsons were not present; they were down in Gilgit doing their Scouts' training. We left about four, but the Mir settled down to see the daylight out at the sports and to preside at another bigger feed to The Great of the land. He was an amazing man for nearly seventy, and apparently entered into these shows with as much zest as the people themselves.

DIGRESSION TO YASIN

zhingát breeds caution, not contempt. As we rode in we saw 487
Ali Ausat at the nicely carved door of his house, rather grubby
but pleased to see us, passed the miserable apology for a [743]
hospital which contrasts ill with the well-built one at Aliábád,
though the two Mirs got the same grant from Government
for the purpose of building them, and on past a fine, large,
shallow pond. On our right was a steep green slope with jolly
poplars and a lot of grass, and then we reached the polo-
ground. Here the Mir came himself to meet us from the
shelter of a roofed summer-house where he had been waiting.
Another mile of almost perpendicular zigzag, which the ponies
could only just manage, brought us to the familiar old polo-
ground (now disused for play), with its lovely double line of
poplars. This peculiarly steep and horrible approach is new,
and the Mir is very proud of it. From the top there is a mag- 644
nificent view with the pond below looking like a lake and the 643
Mir's palace picturesquely perched on a steep hill-face with
fine windows looking out not at any view but straight into
the terraced hillside opposite. Mir Sikandar Khan looked
shrunken and frail compared with ten years ago, but very brisk,
and was apparently able to ride up his new road without a
qualm.

He himself received us most hospitably and kindly, but his [511]
people serve him ill. Immediately on our arrival a shindy broke
out with talk of grass- and fodder-shortage, though grass and
fodder are plentiful in Nagir, and we found the rest-house
dirty and unswept, bathroom and utensils uncared for, and a
general atmosphere of grudging incompetence pervading it.

We dined with the Mir that evening and duly entertained 643
him in return, while I paid a visit to the ladies and met the
numerous little princes and princesses. The Queen of Nagir,
a fine, handsome woman, not a day older than when I had last
seen her eleven years ago, is a sister of Khan Sahib Mir Baz
Khan of Yasin, and I was able to bring her first-hand news of
her brother and his family, in which it is fair to say she did not
seem over-interested. But she is a gracious motherly woman,
and very intelligent—she even followed my Burushaski (Hunza
variety) with ease. The brightest moments of my call were

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

between your knees of a frightened horse. We put the animals into a quick trot—anything faster only invites stumbling—and got happily across without accident, though some quite nasty rocks were falling at intervals. All the rest got over safely too. We were not sorry when this bit of the road, was behind us. These two Nagir *zhingáts* are to my mind the ugliest bits of road in the Agency. They don't look nearly as sensational as the many *peris*—which can, of course, be dangerous enough at times—but a firm shelf, however high and narrow, is preferable to a shifting surface.

Somewhere below us under the cliffs on the Nagir side of the river gorge, but out of sight of the road, is the Hakúchar spring, where Hunza and Nagir royal ladies occasionally go into camp together for a few days. It was pleasant to think that the young princesses, married across the water into the related family of the hereditary foe, are able to meet their own womenfolk in privacy from time to time. When such a party is arranged five large tents are pitched there for them.

It was very hot slithering down the powdery spiral descent to river level, riding along the sea-beach to the bridge and then mounting the long Hunza zigzag to Murtazábád, but once there we came again into the welcome shade of apricots and *gindáwer* (jujube trees, I think). I very much wished that some of our own family could have been with us to see our arrival "home." Never in the days when DL was Political Agent and was popularly believed to have money and offices in his gift did we get such a reception. Though we were forty-eight hours ahead of our programme, the news that we were coming had got all round the countryside. Our easily identifiable little procession had, of course, been seen crawling for hours along the Nagir mountain side. Four miles out from Aliábád, on the hither side of the great Hasanabad Nullah, the advance guard met us: two small boys of six or seven had pattered out on their bare feet to be the first to welcome us. A few hundred yards farther on another little pair; next the three levies, who were, of course, to a small extent in our pay (they got the princely sum of nine rupees a month every third month when they came "on duty"!), and then at the bridge at the bottom.

4: Lorimer L-3 (1930-4; 1934-5) 1935 AV7 Burusho AV7

No. XI.

The Custom in regard to The Tham's Annual Visit to Hèrber.

Every Autumn, in September or October, or on the 15th. or 20th. of Sambula, the Tham sets out for Hèrber taking with him eighty followers and Elders. With ten or fifteen Elders, fifteen men of superior rank, twenty minor servants, seven or eight huntsmen, eight bandsmen and four grooms, thus he sets out.

It is the custom for the Elders of Galmit and, in addition, a number of young men, to come as far as Chaman Gul to receive the Tham. Slaying a goat and loading it along with a supply of bread in a panier they bring it to Bulchi Das for his reception. It is called *Otaq*. Then the Tham stops there and eats it. When he has eaten and has gone on to Chacha Hera the women come out on to the edge of the terrace and wave their hands round in the Tham's honour.

(Proceeding) thence they keep playing music in front of the Tham (until) he dismounts at the Galmit dancing place. When the Tham has dismounted they present an ox before him. In former times it was the custom for the Tham to give orders to a distinguished Elder, upon which the latter, they say, seizing the ox and pulling

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11 *tsilaŋuru* — probably from *trlz* 'there' and not from *tsil* etc. 'earth'. There seems to be a verb or two missing in this sentence: the party proceeds, music being played in front of the Tham until the Galmit dancing ground is reached, when the Tham dismounts.

12 *dzidzu* — "they make an ox stand", "they stand up an ox", or "they keep an ox standing for the Tham", a sort of technical expression for presentation.

burnt. *gunj γolurj* may your beard be burnt! (a curse). *gupírilo* 000
uγolɟʌn may your hair be burnt! *hun iγ'olimi* the wood was burnt. *γol'ʌs gumʌnj* may you be burnt (a curse). *(i)γulom ɟʌpik jar ayau* don't give me burnt bread. *uγulumilo ɟʌpik* burnt bread (pl.).

2. To burn as the result of extreme cold, be frostbitten (?). — *aríj γolurći, γolumi* my hand will be, was, frostbitten (described as becoming stiff and numb).

(Cp. **-ʌsqolʌs*).

γolćin, gulćin, qulćin pl. *γolćiyo* hm. head-cook (of rajas etc. only), H. *xansa-mam.* 6440

M. M. P. supplies the following note: "'Superintendent of the Kitchen of the Tham'". There are two *γolćin*, one the superintendent who has charge of the flour for the kitchen and superintends the baking of bread by women; the other is a cook who cooks *sálan*'. (= meat and vegetable dishes?). 60.20 ff., 340.9,12.

(Cp. Sh. *qolćin*, land-steward (?). Kho. *γolćin*, official in charge of grain).

γulk -ʌnts x underground water-tank, cistern. — *γulk wʌli.ʌs* to construct a tank. *majur yam hʌn γulkʌn bim* under the weeping-willow was a tank, pond. 262.17 ff. 312

As far as I have seen there are no wells in Hunza-Nagir fed by subsurface springs. The *γulk* is a pit dug in the ground and filled periodically from an irrigation channel. It is roofed over a little above ground-level, one side being left open; but in this story the *γulk* cannot have been covered over.

1856

124
115 that one would never believe that it was only a second-
191 ary language to him.

231 "You know," I said to the Mir, "one of the things
115 that I wanted to see when I came to Hunza was a yak. I understand from my readings that yaks are used in this part of the country and I have been looking everywhere as I walked along the road to Baltit, but I have as yet seen no sign of a yak!"

"That is not hard to explain," the Mir said. "The yaks are further up in the mountains. They cannot stand the heat and we keep them in the higher altitudes where they can be comfortable. If they are brought to the lower altitudes, they suffer. They like to be up around 11,000 feet or higher."

"Well, then how can I get up to see them?" I asked. "I don't mind if I have to walk for a day or two, but see them I must!"

"I'll do better than that," said the Mir. "I will phone and have two yaks brought down as quickly as possible. They will have to come from Passu which is about 38 miles from here. I will have action taken at once and see that the yaks are provided."

115 (Does that not indicate to you the kind of man and
124 host was the Mir of Hunza?)

I then took my leave of the Mir and the Rani and went out with Sultan Ali and Jahangir to look, see, pry and ask questions.

344 Our first jaunt was a good stiff climb to the old
644 palace located about two miles from the Mir's new palace. As the crow would fly I'm sure it would not have been more than ¼ of a mile. But in order to get up there one has to wend and weave and climb slowly.

I was now becoming quite accustomed to the altitude. Kerimabad is up about 8500 feet and I am sure

that the old palace is up at least another 500 or 600 feet. It was perched precariously on a huge outcropping of rock that jutted straight up into the air and the entire surface of the pinnacle was used for the building. There was no superfluous area surrounding it.

I had a long list of questions prepared and I knew even before I started that Sultan Ali could not give me all the answers because many of the questions were strictly horticultural—others dealt with dietary principles. I wanted to talk to farmers and individual people and housewives on both of these subjects.

I asked if he could arrange to take me to a group of farmers or even an individual farmer . . . that is, farmers who were capable and efficient—the better, the more intelligent and prosperous ones . . . so that I might delve into their ways and means of field husbandry.

He nodded, "This will be done. When would you like to talk to them?"

"Tomorrow morning, if it can be done," I replied.

"That's fine. I will arrange it!"

Wherever it was possible, I wanted to get my information direct from the people concerned. There is actually only one class of people in Hunza and one occupation, which is farming. I only know of one shop in the area and it sells mostly goods that have been brought in by the Chinese caravans that have passed through. I don't doubt also that there were some goods in this same shop that came into Hunza via Rawalpindi and Gilgit.

However, it was plain and clear that 900 of the citizens of Hunza out of 1000 made their living by means of farming. Therefore, as I had come to Hunza primarily to study the farming and horticultural methods of the people, the preparation of the foods they ate,

7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza

121 and of course the kinds and varieties of foods that were used, I attached great importance to this phase of my trip and I was definitely determined that, come what might, this information I would have thoroughly and in detail.

124 No doubt it would have been an advantage had I been able to speak either Urdu, or better still Burushaski, so that I could frame my questions as I saw fit and have answers that would be direct and would not require translation. However, that was not possible. Still, I had no reason to believe that my interpreter would not be a forthright individual who would give me the answers that were relayed to him clearly and to the point.

Mind you, I was seeking no miracle or world panacea. I wanted to find out the simple truth!

Further, I wanted to walk from farm to farm . . . that is, just selecting one at random here and there. I wanted to view the farmer's activities, study his soil and examine it, ask a few questions and thus, I could gather the information that I wanted and which was so vital to me.

344 ●644 The old palace proved to be in a good state of preservation. I wondered, because of its good condition, why someone didn't live there. Many of the rooms were still furnished. There were even rugs and tapestries placed and hung in their original positions.

[126] When we climbed to the top of the castle—that is, to the roof where I snapped many photos—it seemed mighty high and overlooked everything around us. But [133] in the distance were mountains that were well over 20,000 feet—and that is no exaggeration, but more likely an understatement.

There was a railing around this upper balcony and from this balcony you could walk into other chambers.

These chambers were once living rooms and bedrooms. 344
It reminded me of a penthouse. While it didn't have an 644
elevator to whiz you upwards in a matter of seconds or the best in modern plumbing, it did have the air, the view, the history and fascination that no penthouse in creation could match.

Back about 400 years ago one of the rulers of Hunza [173] married a daughter of the King of Baltistan who, as [648] a gift to his daughter and her husband, dispatched 500 workmen from his country to Hunza to erect the Baltit Fort that we now know. The rulers of Hunza dwelt in that fort and made it their palace until recent times. The present Mir, too, when he took office after the [712] death of his father, resided in this palace known as Baltit Fort.

The new palace, in which we were being wined, [122] dined and entertained, had been completed recently and was taken possession of by the present Mir about 7 years ago. Actually though, the new palace was started by the Mir's grandfather back as far as 1925.

While we were guests at the palace, extensive ma- sonry work was in progress as the Mir was having a [692] broad, low, stone-walled veranda erected. This, I un- [643] derstand, would be used, on completion, as his court, where the citizens of Hunza would come with their problems and where the Mir would preside in judg- ment.

However, this work in no way interfered with the [342] normal functions of the household, for, even as the people of Hunza follow the custom of moving upstairs for the summer and downstairs for the winter, so did the Mir.

To me, however, old Baltit Fort was an edifice of distinction, charm and beauty and if I were in the Mir's place, I would never have abandoned it.

344 This massive old fortress, for that is what it was,
●644 was actually one of the places that had withstood the
712 attacks of invaders for more than 400 years and re-
727 mained impregnable. It has only once been in enemy
[175] hands since the day it was built and that was in 1891, when, after the Battle of Nilt, it was occupied by the British. Records further indicate that the British added no glory to their occupation at the time because of their indiscriminate looting of the treasures found in the palace. But the Mir, whether because of his friendship for the British or because of his desire to tell the truth, claimed that it was not the British who looted it, but the Dogra troops who were under British command.

344 Here I would like to quote from E. F. Knight's
644 *Where Three Empires Meet:*

352 "This massive fortress, which has been for hundreds of years the secure stronghold of the robber kings, inviolate until this day, stands boldly out, set in the midst of a sublime landscape . . . Twigg, Boisragon and myself took up our quarters in the most comfortable chamber we could find, which we soon discovered to have been the apartment of the ladies belonging to the
[643] Thum's harem. ("Thum" is Burushaski for ruler, sovereign, king, chief, "Mir". Used especially of the hereditary rulers of the states of Hunza and Nagir.) It was surrounded by a low, broad, wooden divan, on which our bedding was laid. Pillars of carved wood rose from the edge of the divan to the carved beams of the roof, blackened by the smoke of ages. . . . A fire was lit in the open fireplace at one end of the floor, the smoke escaping through a square hole in the roof. Save for the Oriental pattern of the wooden carvings it was just a hall, I imagine, as King Canute might have lived in. . . . We enjoyed a delicious night's rest after our late fatigues.

"We were up betimes on December 23rd, and proceeded to rummage all the nooks and corners of the deserted palace. We had heard that the treasures of many a pillaged caravan . . . were stored here, so the search was an exciting one. The tribesmen had been informed that, provided they gave up their arms, their property would be respected by us. . . But the possessions of the fugitive Thum were declared to be forfeited, so we set to work to collect together all the valuables that were to be found in the place, individual looting being of course forbidden. . . . We were informed that the Thum had made all his preparations for flight long before his defeat at Nilt, and . . . had carried off the bulk of his wealth with him across the Hindoo Koosh. . . . Still, they had not taken all, and we raked together a curious and miscellaneous collection of odds and ends scattered about and secreted away in the various chambers and cellars."

On two sides this mighty fortress (and it is a mighty fortress for that part of the world) is protected by abysses.

As the views of the mountains and the surrounding country from the balconies were unrivaled, I took many colored photographs and with each click of the shutter I hoped for the best.

I noticed a marvelous old firing piece, gun or matchlock. I don't know how to describe these things as I am not very familiar with firearms. However, I found out that this was a genuine treasure and was almost as old as the fort itself.

It was a most unusual firing piece. By actual measurement it was 6 feet long, elegantly and extravagantly decorated with silver and gold, and bore the inscription "946 A.H."

What had evidently been an old calendar portray-

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CHAPTER 29

Hunzan Crafts and Skills

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THE NEXT MORNING Jahangir came to our quarters just as I was ready to leave for breakfast. Cec again remained in bed on the doctor's advice.

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The Mir was waiting for us in his bright, pleasant sun room when we entered and with him was another handsome, beaming man whom he introduced as his brother, Ayesh, who had just returned from a trip up country.

It is customary for the Mir's oldest brother to remain unmarried and act as an advisor, assistant, secretary or whatever else this position might be termed. He also acted as the Mir's emissary and was the engineer of the electric light outfit in operation at the palace.

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We were then ushered into the dining room for breakfast. The Mir, Ayesh and the Rani seated themselves just to keep us company and of course add delight and conversation while we breakfasted.

124 "You understand," he said, "that the reason I do
[788] not have breakfast with you is due entirely to the fact that I must rise at 3:30 every morning to perform my religious duties . . . and 'tis then I have my morning meal."

"Thank you most sincerely for your explanation. It is most important to me so I may better understand the ways of your people and yourself."

Then the Mir went on, "I have received word that two yaks are being brought down from Passu and should arrive at Altit some time during the night and will be there tomorrow morning."

Then I said to the Mir, "Would it be all right if I walked to Altit and rode one of the yaks back here to your palace?"

"That's exactly what I had in mind for you," said the Mir.

"Well, seeing there are two yaks coming down, as you mentioned, and my friend Cec is confined to his quarters by the doctor, I'll take Jahangir along and he'll ride the other yak back."

"Fine, fine!" said the Mir.

124 Then the conversation continued and the Mir said,
115 "I have another brother and I certainly hope you will
● 644 have an opportunity to meet him. He is serving in the Pakistan army—as a captain. I expect him back within the next 3 or 4 days and you will enjoy meeting him, I know. He is a most likable and interesting man. I hope he gets here before you decide to leave."

"I'd be very happy to meet him and I, too, hope he arrives before we depart."

"We call him Salat," he said. "That means mous-
[302] tache in our language. He has one of those handlebar moustaches and he's a big man—bigger than either Ayesh or I. His proper name is Capt. Jamshed Khan."

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Ayesh was a most jovial character. He had the most pleasant smiling happy countenance of any man I've ever met. He was always either laughing or smiling and every time I looked at him I had to smile as well. He was a handsome man but in contrast to the Mir, who had a good head of dark hair, Ayesh was balding, the same as I.

It was most pleasant to see the splendid cordial relationship that existed between him and the Mir's entire family.

"How are you coming along with your quest for information?" asked the Mir.

"Exceptionally well, sir," I replied. "But there are also many questions that only you can answer and I'm hoping that you can spare a few minutes some time within the next few days in private so that I may gain this information."

"Any time you say," replied the Mir pleasantly. "I'm at your disposal. You mention the time and that will be it."

"You are indeed very kind to grant me this great favor and I appreciate it," I said.

So there and then we made an appointment for 5 o'clock the following day.

Every meal at the Mir's was a joy and a delight and both the Mir and the Rani were always present. I had already mentioned to him that this was a trouble and an imposition and too much to expect of him. But he said that it was the way he wanted it and that nothing was too good and no effort too great for his guests. Well, what can you do with a man like that?

Then he informed me concerning my friend's health. "The doctor has things under control now," he told me, "but he will remain here with me as my guest at the palace during your stay so there will be no worries

of the Aga Khan and his wife in various poses and stages of his life. I had given some study to these photographs and many of them were inscribed in the hand of the Aga Khan with endearing terms to his friend, Jamal.

Our quarters were in the guest house—actually adjoining the palace but on a higher level. This building had been erected by the Mir's grandfather back in 1925. It was a well-built, handsome structure, firmly ensconced on a high rocky ledge of granite.

You walked down the Mir's long staircase from the sun room, then you walked up half a dozen or more stone steps, forward a few feet and then you climbed up a circular, enclosed wooden staircase to the guest quarters. These consisted of a large, comfortable sitting room with many easy chairs and a fine writing desk, a large bedroom with two comfortable beds and further on was the bathroom. Then to the right of the lovely sitting room was a balcony—spacious and inviting. From it you could view Rakaposhi and all its splendor and gorgeous loveliness.

The furniture all round was similar to that which you would find in the average better-class American homes. Photographs adorned the walls, among which were the photos of the old Aga Khan and his French wife.

When I mentioned the Aga Khan to the Mir, he waxed eloquent and his face beamed and he said, "Not only was I fond of him—not only did I love him—but we were close intimate friends. He was the most generous of men and especially to the people of Hunza. I revere his memory! He was a wonderful person. We really miss him since his passing. His ancestors came from Persia to India in 1834. In 1934, one hundred years later, to celebrate the jubilee of the founding of

often get a sudden heavy flow of water and these rivers get deeper and broader and flood the roads. But then later, when it gets a bit cooler or cloudy, the river recedes and the river bed is again used as a road.

The alternative for the river bed is to climb hundreds or thousands of feet up along a road cut in the rock of the mountain or where a ledge might have been formed. When it is impossible to walk along the river bed, and this occurs regularly, in some places you must climb a few thousand feet . . . that is the only way you can continue your journey.

No matter how difficult, how dangerous or treacherous a roadway may be, there are some people who must get across, who must make their journey at that time. It is true everywhere in the world.

Therefore, when traveling on such terrain, it is positively advisable to try to get there and do your traveling when the rivers are not in flood. You can see why the river bed is preferable.

Altit is the name of the town wherein is located the old Altit Fort which was built in the thirteenth century. I don't know whether or not the other members of the party will agree with me but I did think that Altit was an exceptionally clean, tidy and orderly town. It was one of the first villages in Hunza to be settled because the area consists of a wide level, arable stretch of land almost two miles wide from the mountain wall to the bank of the river and here the drop was sheer—straight down for a thousand feet or more.

Oh, yes, all Hunza villages are clean and orderly but somehow it struck me that Altit was better then most. Perhaps the Mir knew this and that is why he had his picnic bungalow built there. I am convinced that Altit was the most attractive village I found in the entire country.

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CHAPTER 33

The Mir's Summer Cottage

ALTIT FORT has quite a history. I believe it to be the most historic and most important edifice in all of Hunza. Records that have been handed down would indicate that the fort was about 700 years old and it was erected like a perch, right on a sharp bank of the Hunza River, on what was originally a sharp gigantic precipice.

It may be smaller and perhaps simpler in construction than the larger fort at Baltit, but I thought it was big enough after I walked all around it and went in and out of all its chambers. Then, too, it is much larger now than it was in those days because the present Mir had a new wing erected so that when he holds court and carries out the seed-sowing ceremony, there will be plenty of room for his family, guests and visitors.

I gained the impression that it was a tight little fortress—well built from blocks of rock, expertly

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644 wedged together to form a formidable protection
712 against invaders of their day.

796 'Tis for the Festival of the Bopfau, which is the
241 Burushaski name given to the barley-seed-sowing festi-
643 val, that the Mir comes dressed in all his regal finery and robes of state to practice a ritual that has been carried on for hundreds of years by the Mirs of Hunza.

[173] It would appear this ceremony is a carry-over from that performed by the ancient Greeks and the people of Hunza like to emphasize this, as though forging another link in the chain of evidence that would tie them in as descendants of Alexander the Great.

[292] On this occasion the Mir wears a magnificent gown with a wide belt fastened around his waist, in harmony with the gold brocade that bedecks the gown. At his side he carries the ceremonial sword in a carved ivory scabbard. He makes a most imposing, handsome figure with his head crowned with a clerical cap with flowing egret feathers held in place by a large golden pin. The Mir's brother, Ayesh, and the Mir's eldest son, the heir apparent, come similarly attired.

With an assembled crowd watching, the Mir drives a plough pulled by two oxen or a yak down and back along the field and into this furrow he sprinkles seed mixed with gold dust. The ceremony is repeated three times and then the Mir throws handfuls of the seed
[789] into the air. Fable has it that if anyone catches a grain of seed and takes it home and mixes it with his own seed, he will be assured of a fine harvest.

The seed-sowing ceremony is not only performed at Altit but in two other Hunzan villages so that the Hunzan farmers can come and catch a seed to insure themselves of plenty for the following year. By doing it in three different locations, it means that no Hunzan farmer will have to walk more than a few miles to partake of the Mir's blessings.

partake of the Mir's blessings.

In comparing the fort at Altit and the one at Baltit, I gained the impression that the one at Altit had more rooms . . . smaller ones they were, but there seemed to be more of them. The old fort at Baltit was much larger and more impressive. Yet somehow I became more attached to the Altit Fort. I had the impression that it was almost impregnable.

Then I recalled the true story of the capture of the fort by the British and, after appraising its isolation, strength and precipitous banks and sides, I thought to myself, "Any group of men who had the courage to attempt to scale and capture any fort in Hunza deserved a lot more glory and loot than they would ever get in Hunza . . . and that is for certain!"

On one of the balconies stood a man with a bowl of apricots and Sultan Ali said, "This man is the chowkidor, or guardian, of the fort and it is customary to give him a gift."

"Of what?" I asked.

"Oh, about 10 rupees," replied Sultan Ali.

Jahangir almost jumped a foot when he heard that and he said, "For what? He hasn't done anything and we haven't eaten any of his apricots."

"Well," Sultan Ali said, "it's just customary!"

"Customary or no," said Jahangir, "I think it's ridiculous!"

I turned to Sultan Ali and said, "Normally I'd be glad to give him the tip that you suggest, but the truth of the matter is my fund of Pakistan rupees is just about nonexistent. When we set out for Hunza from Pindi we calculated in advance approximately how many rupees we would need and then we added on 100 extra, and that's what we came with.

"From the stories that we read and from the infor-

mation that we could gather, we were under the impression that no money was used in Hunza. Therefore we didn't calculate on spending any. So far we have parted with approximately 300 rupees and to place the matter squarely in front of you, we don't have enough money to buy our plane tickets back from Gilgit to Rawalpindi! I'm hoping we'll be able to get some money at the bank in Gilgit because I did notice that there's a bank there, so I'm afraid I'll have to pass up the 10 rupees that I'm supposed to give the chowkidor of the fort. But tell him I enjoyed my visit to the fort very much anyway!"

While we were wandering around on the open balcony of the old fort, Sultan Ali pointed to a neat looking place down below, but not far distant, and said, "That is the Mir's picnic place, where he comes every Saturday evening with his family. He stays there Sunday and Monday, returning to the palace for his various duties Monday evening. This practice is followed during the summer months."

"Well," I replied, "that's a custom that's followed pretty well in the West and probably in most places around the world . . . where one tries to get away from the usual home conditions and seeks refuge in a cottage. We, generally speaking, call this our summer cottage. And you know what? Many folks and families travel hundreds of miles just for the weekend, just as long as they can get away from home and the sameness of living for a few days at a time!"

"I guess we've seen everything here at the old fort worth seeing. So let's go down and make for the Mir's picnic place," I said as I headed for the stairs.

It was a walk of but a few hundred yards and we were soon at the garden gate of the bungalow. Sultan Ali spoke in Burushaski to one of the chowkidors who

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produced a key and opened the door.

Soon I was wandering through the well-appointed summer cottage. It was neat, tidy, clean and solidly built but of course it was not on par with the palace—nor would one expect it to be. After all, as mentioned, it was but a weekend spot and what we would call a summer cottage back home. Yet, of course, it was much nicer than the average summer cottage, but not as good as some of our elegant ones back home.

I was rather surprised and quite amused to note that the walls were covered rather widely with shiny lithographed pictures . . . yes, it was good printing or lithographing work. The pictures were obviously put out by the Chinese communist government and everywhere they showed workers and working girls with beaming faces, wearing good clothes and looking prosperous, but no one could doubt that these pictures were splendid specimens of communist propaganda.

One of the most effective pictures for propaganda purposes, I gathered, was one that showed the happy beaming faces of whites, yellows, blacks—all mixed and enjoying life together.

At first I thought that the Mir couldn't have known about these pictures hanging in his bungalow, but then I gathered that he must know about them. Evidently he doesn't fear them or worry about them. Perhaps he knows his people better than anyone else.

I do not have to go into a long discourse to prove to myself or to anyone else that the Mir does not have communistic leanings because communism would quickly and definitely stamp out any form of absolute rule like his Mirship. Yet I can also see the absolute necessity of the Mir keeping on friendly terms and not antagonizing either the Russian or the Chinese Communists. Then to make the situation even more hazard-

They were obviously of American or European origin . . . probably grown from seeds that someone had sent him. Plants like zinnias, snapdragons and asters were readily recognizable.

Then, I was very much surprised to see in front of the bungalow, of all things, a swimming pool . . . and the youth of the district were swimming and enjoying themselves to the fullest possible extent. They were shouting, laughing, splashing and cavorting about just as you would expect boys and girls to do in any swimming pool in America. They displayed the same reckless abandon, glee and happiness that our children do.

At this time I thought to myself that here was another mark of the Mir's bigness. He was allowing the children of the town to make full use of his personal family swimming pool. This was quite different from what most people expect of eastern potentates.

I'm not sure that this little incident impresses you but I assure you I was quite impressed by it. It added to my conviction that the people of Hunza were really free and democratic.

A little way off were our yaks and their guides. "Let's go," I said to Jahangir and Sultan Ali, making straight for the yaks. "The Mir and Cec will be waiting for us, so I guess we'd best be off."

I selected the larger of the two yaks because I'm quite a bit heavier, or almost twice as heavy as Jahangir. I was assisted on to the yak's back and the yak didn't seem to be too happy about it! For the first time since I'd been riding, which wasn't very long, I felt really comfortable. The well-padded broad back of the animal was delightful to sit on and, best of all, he had a western style saddle. I'm always afraid of falling off a horse with those English saddles because I've got nothing to hold on to except the reins and for my kind of

115 Now I didn't see his birth certificate and I might as
165 well tell you, right here and now, that no vital statistics are kept in Hunza. I accept the figure of his age as he told me but remember, I was not there at the time of his birth!

344 When I was through with my spasm of inspection
644 and admiration, we began to parade up the long driveway that led into the Mir's garden. This area is flanked on the right by space that looks as though it were a parking lot, and maybe that's exactly what it is, but instead of cars, the guests or members of the family park—or should I say tether—their horses and yaks in this area. Maybe now they park their jeeps there.
[493] The Mir owns two of them, but one, I understand, was away in Pindi being repaired. (Or was it the shambles and horrible wreck of a jeep that I came across a week later, on the road back to Gilgit?)

126 Now I noticed that the Mir, Ayesh, the doctor and Cec were coming along the roadway to meet us, and soon we joined forces and were gathered in one group. I thought this was the ideal time to take some photographs and, luckily for us, they were the best photographs we took on the entire trip. Photography is something that has never interested me and I had never
[122] taken half a dozen pictures in my life. Before leaving home, I did try to learn a bit about photography, but I couldn't learn enough fast enough.

124 When the fun, excitement and fast-flowing humorous remarks had subsided, I said to the Mir, "If you've nothing more important to do or if you would care to give me a little more of your time, we could start that question and answer session that I arranged with you for this afternoon."

"I am at your service," he replied pleasantly and with alacrity.

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CHAPTER 34

About the People of Hunza

164 THE CLAIMS made for the people of Hunza border on
165 the fantastic. It is claimed that there they live to be 140 and more years of age without trouble and that their mountain home is the genuine Shangri-la, where a man can live without worry or stress in perfect joy and happiness. The claim is also made that their men can sire children when they're 70, 80, 90 and even 100 years of age.

Yes, and another visitor to Hunza said that the women of 80 and 90 are as youthful and as beautiful as our own women of 30 and 40. Well, apart from the [644] Rani who I truly believe was one of the most beautiful women I have ever been privileged to see, I didn't notice anything spectacular about the women of Hunza.

123 Let me be even more frank . . . I hardly saw any women at all. Over the many miles of Hunza territory that I walked, I seldom saw a woman. I saw a few girls

here and there and most of them snickered, giggled and hid or turned their backs so that I couldn't see their faces, just as the girls and women did in Nagir. I did notice and pass many women constantly in the fields, but not once did I think that they even compared with our own attractive women . . . let alone surpass them! 123

Nor do I want you to get the impression that I am prejudiced. To me, at least, a woman can be beautiful whether she be black, yellow, tanned or white. I believe myself to be the kind of a man who shows no prejudice, at least where women are concerned, if you know what I mean!

Here I also want to state that it could be I was somewhat at a disadvantage. In the Western world, when one meets or sees a woman, it is usually at her best or close to it. Here the situation was, I admit, drastically different. I either saw them in the fields or coming or going to and from the fields to their homes or doing household chores in their homes. None of these occupational hazards would give a woman a chance to show herself at her prettiest or to her own best advantage.

I did not inquire as to the Rani's age. I am generally fairly bold but I just wasn't bold enough to pose that question to the Mir or to the Rani herself, although I had ample opportunity to do so had I the courage. 644 165

She would compare favorably in every way with any woman in her twenties. If I did not know her position and I were asked to estimate her age, I would say 24 or 25 but remember, she is the wife of the Mir and has borne him 9 living children, one of whom is married and another of whom is engaged to be married to the Prince of Chitral. Their eldest daughter is married to Yaseen Durishahwar and they have two sons, which means that the Rani is a grandmother. But I still insist that she doesn't look a day over 25.

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misdemeanors on the scale that we know them in the Western world are practically unknown in Hunza. That being the case, it behooves us to investigate and study family life in Hunza, for juvenile delinquency is becoming a very serious and ever broadening problem in America.

I saw samples of Hunzan justice. Its simplicity made me weep . . . when I recalled our procrastinating, shackled, unwieldy, judicial system. In the Western world civil cases take months and even years to be heard in court before a judge. In Hunza there are so few cases of wrongdoings, or even individual or family problems, that a hearing can be arranged almost immediately.

Petty squabbles or differences between husband and wife or even other disputes can be brought before the Wazir or before the Mir in private. When something more serious is at stake, the grieved party or parties bring their case to the "morning durbar," which is held regularly in the courtyard surrounded by the beautiful gardens at the entrance to the Mir's palace. At the time I was at Baltit many workmen were busily engaged in erecting a large stone enclosure or balcony where the "durbars" will be held, allowing more room for spectators and greater comfort for the counsel.

During the proceedings the Mir sits comfortably ensconced on a square-shaped wooden divan, luxuriantly smothered in rugs, fancy cushions and tapestries. There is none of the strict court procedure or dourness and frigidity known to our Western judiciary system. Here one feels that he is talking to a friend—a fellow citizen—or at least, an acquaintance.

Perhaps we have carried our ideas of justice, freedom and democracy a bit too far. In order that everyone may be afforded justice and fair treatment at the hands

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684 837 Morality in Hunza is of a high level, equal to that of the best records in the world. Sexual promiscuity on the part of either male or female is practically unknown. It is clear and established that they are clean thinking and clean living people. However, the Mir did tell me that on rare occasions there was trouble involving the eternal triangle.

644 853 608 The strangest custom that I found practiced in Hunza was that followed by the royal family . . . that is, the Mir's family . . . and it pertained to their children. As soon as a child is born to the royal family, it is given out to foster parents to be reared and brought up by these parents as their own. And there the royal child remains for an unspecified period of years. The child is brought to the palace on occasions and then returned to its foster home.

The exact purpose for this practice was hard to pin down. I felt that probably it was done to save the queen or Rani the difficulty of raising the child through its infancy. I also thought that perhaps this would allow the queen to have more children, and thus be sure to create a long line of descendants to follow in the ruler's footsteps or lineage. It was also suggested that this was a way or manner or means of strengthening the ties of the ruler with his people—a sort of democratic gesture.

The people to whom the child is given out for rearing are referred to as "milk parents" or "milk family." The tie that is thus established with these people is never broken. The individual members of the family are referred to as the milk-mother, the milk-father, the milk-brother and the milk-sister.

In every case, before the child is given out to its milk parents, their character, their habits and their way of life are carefully scrutinized so that the royal couple

know that the child will be given a fine upbringing.

It is to be expected that the milk parents will be given much consideration and favors from the Mir's household and family . . . and the Mir has and still does provide better than average homes or residences for these selected people.

In Hunza at the present time, the Mir has built a row or unit of bungalows for these milk parents and they are given food and necessities from the royal kitchen.

I have tried to find some connection of this practice with other nations or peoples. So far my search has been unsuccessful in this regard.

Death is not the serious thing with the people of Hunza that it is with most other peoples throughout the world. That does not mean that there is no sadness and mourning, but it does not take on the same scope and seriousness that it does in the West. This is primarily due to the religion and beliefs of the people. Being Mohammedans, they believe in predestination . . . "So Allah wills."

Seldom are graves of departed kinfolk visited—nor are flowers laid upon them. In fact, very little maintenance is ever carried out on graves. Visits to the graves or graveyards are definitely not encouraged. The dead are revered, but visiting the grave of the departed is not really the accepted thing in Hunza.

The dead are often commemorated by having roadside lean-tos or "baldies," as they call them, erected for them . . . where a man can stop and find a bit of shelter during a storm, or rest his pack or load. They also build "jhurks" or water holes to serve the same purpose. Women are seldom commemorated in this manner. The best that a woman can hope to get is a rock pile erected in her memory.

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Hunza

534 644 *The piano in the palace was brought by the Mir's grandfather.* This was stated in one of the books I read about Hunza.

The story from the Mir's own lips is, "The piano was brought to Gilgit via Bandipoor and Burzil Pass from Kashmir for the Political Agent who was British. It was installed in the Political Agent's house in Gilgit in 1895. In 1947 when the partition came, it was presented to me by the last British Political Agent, Colonel R. N. Bacon, along with the Union Jack which is unfurled in Gilgit. The piano was brought to Baltit on [482] the backs of 24 men."

164 *Disease is unknown in Hunza.* Oh, how I wish that were true! It was the fondest wish of my heart and soul when I left for Hunza that I could return and be able to attest the fact that disease is unknown in that country.

From definite assertions made by the doctor who was stationed at Aliabad in Hunza, it is true that such diseases as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and hypertension are absolutely unknown in Hunza. But there are other diseases, perhaps not as crucial but, nevertheless, maladies of a serious nature.

As more of civilization's luxuries become known and used in Hunza, it is assured that many more of the diseases of civilization, as yet unknown in Hunza, will make their way into that country.

165 *No infant mortality*—I am unable to speak for the past, but at the present day infant mortality is known in Hunza. As mentioned elsewhere in this book, statistics are unavailable as no records are kept. But the present doctor in Aliabad forcibly states that infant mortality is a force to be reckoned with in Hunza at the present time.

8:Clark N-5 (1948-1951) 1963
AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza

[P.41-D]

644
142
291
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[562] [574] MIR'S DAUGHTER, the Princess Nilofar, is spokesman for Hunza's women, who, despite public segregation and their low status, never are forced to marry against their will.

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV 7

491 sisting only of the foot rope and one side rope, and have crossed them when the connecting ropes were broken and useless, but I never did so willingly, for we had a terrible lesson. A native officer and half a dozen men had been sent on from Gilgit ahead of us to try the bridges, and to arrange for necessary repairs. Coming to one bridge they tried it carefully, going over one at a time, and examining the anchorage and ropes. Thinking all was sound they foolishly returned in a body, crossing, of course, one behind the other. As the leading man got well up the slope towards the timber anchorage, followed by five others, the ropes drew or broke, and the whole party were dashed into the water. Two men, entangled in the ropes, were washed ashore on the bank they had started from, for the anchorages on the far side fortunately held, and the ropes swung across the stream and ashore, but the other unfortunates, caught in the awful torrent, were swept away and instantly drowned. Only one body was recovered, and that forty miles down stream.

487 The road shortly after crossing the river rose twelve hundred feet to cross the end of a spur from Rakapushi, and, descending again, ran generally at a level of six or eight hundred feet above the river — which one could hear roaring through its deep-cut bed below — across uncultivated wastes, and in and out of numerous deep ravines till the cultiva-
644 tion of Nilt was reached. Here Uzr Khan, the eldest living son, and the heir-apparent of the ruling chief, Jafr Khan, met us. He was rather a fine-looking fellow, with a pleasant enough face

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

when he smiled, but with generally a boorish and sulky expression. He received us very cordially, and after we had breakfasted under a fine plane tree he came and discussed affairs. I could see that my main difficulty would be to persuade my new friends that we had come to Gilgit to stay. Biddulph's withdrawal had made them very chary of having anything to do with us. 644

I examined the country very carefully as we marched, and noted the difficulty of the great ravine behind Nilt, which three years later was to baffle for eighteen days the attack of our troops. On the whole the road was better than I expected, and it seemed to me, as I find noted in my diary, "that a decently-armed and led force should not have much difficulty in forcing its way in." My hosts were not averse to my sketching, and I had a road sketch and report made every day, but I did not like to make too much of it, and contented myself personally with noting the positions and the chances of attack they offered. The conclusion I eventually arrived at was that the Hunza-Nagar country presented the most appalling difficulties, and that, with well-armed men holding the country, an advance into it would be terribly costly. 133 487

The views of Rakapushi were very fine, though not so grand as I had hoped, for we were marching too close under it. Still, a mountain rising nineteen thousand feet above you, and over twenty-five thousand feet in height, must be fine when you get a glimpse of it. The next day's march was, however, far more striking; the road rose over gigantic moraine masses, crossing ravine after ravine

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV 7

villages and of cultivation, the terraced fields carried right down into the river bed. Hunza itself lies on the right bank of a ravine ending in a dark glacier, from whose melting ice is supplied the channel which waters the whole of the Hunza cultivation. The houses of the main village are clustered tier upon tier on a high spur crowned by the Thum's Castle. The arrangement at Nagar is precisely the same.

Our entry into Nagar was very similar to my last year's entry into Chitral, only that the crowd was on a smaller scale, the courtiers not so numerous or so brilliantly arrayed. Still it was picturesque enough; before us rode a man bearing a scarlet and white banner; around us, wherever the road permitted, was the gay crowd in Bokhara silks or dirty woollen home-spun. The usual irregular salute was fired as we reached the polo ground, and the band made discordant music. Raja Jafr Khan could not receive me, being paralysed, so we moved without further ceremony into our camp by the polo ground, preceded by Raja Uzr Khan, who showed, by riding before us, a lack of breeding which scandalised the other Rajas, and which compared very unfavourably with the Mehtar of Chitral's courtesy.

Next morning I paid my state visit to Raja Jafr Khan. The road runs up through the village to the Thum's Castle, under a succession of easily defensible doorways, which would make an assault very difficult for bad troops or local enemies. The Palace stairs consisted of the trunk of a tree with notches cut in it, which led up through a square hole in the floor to the terraced rooms above. In this, as in every other house I ever entered in these wilds, the last two of

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV 7

644 three doors are placed in the right angle turn of a
342 very narrow passage which only one man can use at a time, and the doorways are so low that a tall man has to bend almost double to pass through them. The object is to prevent a rush, and to make it impossible for a man to use his weapons as he passes through the last doorway. Similarly the ascent to the flat-topped roof of a man's house is jealously guarded, and he who considers himself in any danger never sleeps twice in the same part of his room, for the skylight gives an enemy a convenient point of vantage from which to shoot.

643 We found the Thum in a typical square room,
159 with an open skylight, and a sunk hearth in the floor, seated by a balconied window, from which there was an extensive view over his country. His beard was carefully dyed, and it was difficult to guess his age, but he was not an old man; drink and debauchery had reduced him to his present state, and paralysed him
644 from the waist down. We did not stop long, as the visit was merely one of ceremony, and the audience room was full of people, before whom business could not be discussed. Our uniforms were a source of much interest to our hosts, and of considerable discomfort to ourselves. Frock coats and spiked helmets, high boots and spurs, sword and sabretache, are not quite the thing for the grand staircases of the
[534] country. Later in the day Uzr Khan paid me a visit,
644 and we had to sit through an interminable dance pro-
535 gramme, which, as the orchestra consisted of six pairs of kettle-drums, six large drums beaten at both ends, and three pipes, was simply deafening. The dances were all very much the same—six or eight men

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

following each other round and round in a circle— sometimes with sword and shield and the usual flourishes, sometimes with nothing in their hands, now posturing slowly, again flying round with long jumps and steps. In Nagar every one dances—the younger sons of the Thum, Wazirs, and the common herd, all take part. In the pre-Mahomedan days the women also danced, and I should not be surprised if amongst themselves they did not even now join in, but, of course, not on a state occasion, or before strangers. Immediately after the dance came a couple of hours of polo, still to the accompaniment of the band, which played just below our tents, and whose monotonous noise became maddening.

In the evening I dismissed the son of the Hunza Wazir, who had come with letters from the Thum, with my answer and a present. He was good enough to express himself quite satisfied personally, at which I was surprised, for he was wearing a coat of velvet covered with gold embroidery, worth at least five-and-twenty pounds, the outcome of Lockhart's lavish habits of largesse. It was a much more magnificent garment than any I had to give his master, and of much greater value than the present I could afford to give him. He informed me, however, that a scoundrel with him, to whom I had given some money and a choga, was going away hopeless, because I had not promised to renew to him a pension which his father had drawn from the Kashmir Durbar. They were difficult people to deal with in some ways, showed no sense of proportion in making their demands, and really, I believe, could not understand that there must be some limit to one's power of giving rewards.

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

I had to leave Nagar long before I had exhausted
the objects of interest, and many places had perforce 491
to be left unvisited. The morning we left we plunged 133
down below the fort for several hundred feet to the rope bridge which spans the gorge of the Nagar stream. It was a nasty bridge, with very steep slopes, and I thought one of the servants had gone, for he stumbled badly; but he recovered himself, and merely dropped a bundle he was for some reason carrying, which went floating down amongst masses of ice which, broken from the glacier above, were dancing down the furious stream. There was a stiff climb up a couple of thousand feet to the crest of the ridge between the two streams, and an equally steep descent down to the Hunza river. The approach to the bridge, which springs from two great masses of rock on each side of the river, is villainous, over smooth rock and by pathways a few inches wide, kept bad for safety's sake. We were met by various 644 ●
deputations—one shortly after entering Hunza territory, a second at the bridge, a third on the Hunza bank, and I found it was arranged that we should camp directly we got to the top of the cliff above the river, and that we should make our state entry next day. Accustomed to these ceremonious delays from my experience of Chitral, I agreed.

Next morning we started at about half-past seven in uniform, and rode up through the terraced cultivation to the polo ground. Here we were requested to halt, while our salute was being fired by the Wazir in person, he being the only man who could be trusted to fire the gun. It was a gun with a history, which had been cast by a refugee from Wakhan, all the brass household implements in the country having

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

644 been melted down to find metal for it. The Thum of the day was so pleased at possessing it that he at once killed the maker, lest he should go to Nagar and make one there. The Wazir had instructions from his King to go on firing till further orders, but after twenty-three guns we thought they had had enough, and I sent a request that they would stop and let us proceed. We were met at the gate of the fort by Wazir Dadu, rather a pleasant-looking man of about forty-five.

[361] The approach to the fort through the village was much the same as at Nagar, but the road was broader.
643 As we passed over the great water channel which fertilises the Hunza oasis, and which at its débouchere from the parent ravine runs through a low tunnel, an ominous whisper informed me that this was the scene of the old Thum's murder by his rascally son, assisted by his present Wazir, Dadu. The old man was fired at from the roof of a house as he rode in from hawking. The first discharge was not fatal, and the men with the Thum begged him to take refuge for a moment in the irrigation tunnel while they raised help, which, by all accounts, was within an ace of coming, but the old Chief refused, saying, "It was no use; he had lived long enough, and his day was
661 come." His Wazir, Humayum, Dadu's elder brother, was away in Gujhal at the time, and the new Chief sent him an urgent letter, stamped with his father's seal, calling him to return at once to Hunza. But though the letter had been prepared beforehand, was sealed before the warmth was out of the old Chief's body, and was despatched by a trusted messenger, the plot failed. Warned by some friend, or distrusting

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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the wording of the letter, Humayum turned his horse's head, and rode for his life. He reached the passes in safety, and going by Wakhan, entered Chitral, and claimed the hospitality of the Mehtar. This was gladly accorded him, for he was a valuable man in case of trouble with Hunza, and he remained in Chitral, an honoured guest, until his turn came later.

Once inside the fort we had only two sets of stairs to ascend, and they were not so primitive as in Nagar, though they were equally defensible. We were received by the Thum at the top, and seated on an open platform overlooking the village and valley. Safdar Ali Khan was a delicate-looking young man of about twenty-two, with shifty Mongolian eyes, and a chestnut-coloured small peaked beard and moustache. The face was a delicate oval in shape, and weak in expression. He was looking decidedly ill, and considerably pulled down by fever.

The surroundings were richer than in Nagar. A guard of fifteen men armed with breechloaders, English and Russian, surrounded the Chief; the courtiers were better dressed, and good Central Asian carpets were spread on the ground. The Thum himself was handsomely dressed in silks, and wore a beautiful velvet belt of Chinese workmanship, with clasps and bosses of gold studded with torquoise and coral. We stayed but a short time, paying a purely ceremonial visit. On my return to camp I found that the four men of my guard had been prevented from coming upstairs, and that an attempt had been made at stopping my orderlies also. I accordingly at once sent up to the Wazir, and protested against this, saying that I con-

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

644 cluded that my men had been stopped without the Chief's knowledge, and that I would not stand being treated in this way for a moment. My message brought a full apology, but the incident showed the tendency to insolence on the Chief's part, for which I was prepared, and that it was necessary to prove to the young savage that we were not afraid of him, and should insist on being treated with proper distinction.

262 The Thum sent down during the day a dinner for the whole camp, among the ingredients for which was a half-bred yak. In the old days throughout these regions the chief guest had to cut off the beast's head, or, at all events, to strike the first blow with his sword. This part of the ceremony we dispensed with, but we ate the resulting beef, the first we had tasted since leaving India, for in Kashmir, and its outlying districts—Gilgit, Skardu, and Punyal—taking the life of the sacred cow is a deadly crime, which the Hindu rulers punished severely. There were still at this time unfortunate Mahomedans in prison at Srinagar, who had been confined for years, for keeping themselves and families alive during a famine by killing and eating cows.

311 In the afternoon we went for a walk and admired the cultivation, which is extraordinarily careful, the terraced fields falling in one continuous sheet to the river hundreds of feet below. Every inch of available ground is made use of, and we found many miniature fields a couple of feet wide and a dozen feet in length, telling of the pressure of the population, and the difficulty of the food supply.

241 I had heard a tradition that during the fruit season
262 the people were prohibited from eating any form

4: Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 AV3 Dard AV3
Burusho AV7

D 302 the top of the head for a space 2 inches broad in front, tapering to half an inch behind. Those who cannot boast of long locks, dress their hair into numerous small cork-screw ringlets all round the head.[1] On the approach of middle age the whole head is shaved, according to the orthodox Mahommedan fashion, and the beard is allowed to grow. In Chitral the effect of the long-flowing locks reaching to the waist is often extremely picturesque.

D 576 The mode of salutation between equals, on meeting after a prolonged absence, is graceful and pleasing. After clasping each other, first on one side then on the other, hands are joined, and each person in turn kisses the hand of the other. Superiors are greeted either by kissing the hand or touching the foot, both at meeting and parting. In Chitral, when the meeting is between two of unequal rank, the inferior kisses the hand of the superior, who in return kisses the former on the cheek. A similar practice is said to have existed among the ancient Persians.[2]

D 644 B 644 On the occasion of the visit of one chief to another, a rather curious ceremony called "Kobah" takes place. On arrival, the visitor is conducted to the Shawaran,[3] and the followers of both chiefs show their dexterity in firing at a mark set up on a tall pole, from horseback while galloping at speed. After this a bullock is led out before the guest, who draws his sword and does his best to cut its head off at a single blow, or deputes one of his followers to do so, and the carcase is given to his retinue. The custom exists in Shighnan, Badakhshan, Wakhan, Chitral, Yassin, Gilgit, Hunza, and Nager. In the latter place it is customary to slay the bullock with bow and arrow. Of late years the practice has become somewhat modified owing to the strict observance of Mahommedan customs, and it is more usual to give over the bullock alive to the guest, so that its throat may be cut in a more orthodox fashion; but occasionally a chief wishing to show off the strength of his arm and the temper of his blade, will adhere to the old custom.

B 595 582 587 Polygamy is of course practised, and the right of divorce is somewhat wantonly exercised. The marriage of very young children is not common, though occasionally practised. Girls are generally married between the ages of ten and four-

D 595 582 587 B D [367]

[1] Rawlinson mentions this as an ancient Persian fashion.—*Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. IV.

[2] Strabo Book XV., Chapter 3, Section 20.

[3] The Shawaran answers all the purposes of the village green in England, being used for all gatherings and games.